

I have a way to winne their loves againe:

Bring them before me.

Bast. I will seeke them out.

John. Nay, but make haste: the better foote before.

O, let me haue no subiect enemies,
When aduerser Forreyners affright my Townes
With dreadfull pompe of floure inuasion.

Be Mercurie, set feathers to thy heeles,

And flye (like thought) from them, to me againe.

Bast. The spirit of the time shall teach me speed. *Exit.*

John. Spoke like a sprightfull Noble Gentleman.

Go after him: for he perhaps shall neede

Some Messenger betwixt me, and the Peeres,

And be thou hee.

Mef. With all my heart, my Liege.

John. My mother dead?

Enter Hubert.

Hub. My Lord, they say five Moones were seene to
Foure fixed, and the fift did whirle about (night:
The other foure, in wondrous motion.

John. Five Moones?

Hub. Old men, and Beldames, in the streets
Do prophesie vpon it dangerously:
Yong *Arthurs* death is common in their mouths,
And when they talke of him, they shake their heads,
And whisper one another in the eare.
And he that speakes, doth gripe the hearers wrist,
Whilst he that heares, makes fearefull action
With wrinkled browes, with nods, with rolling eyes.

I saw a Smith stand with his hammer (thus)

The whilst his Iron did on the Anvile coole,

With open mouth I swallowing a Taylors newes,

Who with his Sheeres, and Measure in his hand,

Standing on slippers, which his nimble haste

Had falsely thrust vpon contrary feete,

Told of a many thousand warlike French,

That were embattailed, and rank'd in Kent.

Another leane, vnwash'd Artificer,

Cuts off his tale, and talke of *Arthurs* death.

John. Why seekest thou to possesse me with these feares?

Why vrgest thou so oft yong *Arthurs* death?

Thy hand hath murder'd him: I had a mighty cause

To wish him dead, but thou hadst none to kill him.

Hub. No had (my Lord?) why did you not prouoke me?

John. It is the curse of Kings, to be attended

By slaves, that take their humors for a warrant

To breake within the bloody house of life,

And on the winking of Authoritie

To vnderstand a Law; to know the meaning

Of dangerous Maiesty, when perchance it frownes

More vpon humor, then aduis'd respect.

Hub. Heere is your hand and Seale for what I did.

John. Oh, when the last accompt twist heauen & earth

Is to be made, then shall this hand and Seale

Witnesse against vs to damnation.

How oft the sight of meanes to do ill deeds,

Make deeds ill done? Hadst not thou bene by,

A fellow by the hand of Nature mark'd,

Quoted, and sign'd to doe deeds of shame,

This murder had not come into my minde.

But taking note of thy abhor'd Aspect,

Finding thee fit for bloody villanie,

Apt, liable to be employ'd in danger,

I faintly broke with thee of *Arthurs* death:

And thou, to be ended to a King,

Made it no conscience to destroy a Prince.

Hub. My Lord.

John. Hadst thou but shooke thy head, or made a pause

When I spake darkely, what I purposed:

Or turn'd an eye of doubt vpon my face;

As bid me tell my tale in expresse words:

Deepe shame had struck me dumbe, made me break off:

And those thy feares, might haue wrought feares in me.

But, thou didst vnderstand me by my signes,

And didst in signes againe parley with mine,

Yea, without stop, didst let thy heart consent,

And consequently, thy rude hand to acte

The deed, which both our tongues held vilde to name.

Out of my sight, and neuer see me more:

My Nobles leaue me, and my State is braued,

Euen at my gates, with rankes of forraigne powres;

Nay, in the body of this fleshy Land,

This kingdome, this Confinde of blood, and breathe

Hostilitie, and ciuill tumult reignes

Betweene my conscience, and my Conscience death.

Hub. Arme you against your other enemies:

Ile make a peace betweene your soule, and you.

Yong *Arthur* is aliue: This hand of mine

Isey a maiden, and an innocent hand,

Not painted with the Crimson spots of blood,

Within this bosome, neuer entered yet

The dreadfull motion of a murderous thought,

And you haue slander'd Nature in my forme,

Which howsoeuer rude exteriorly,

Is yet the couer of a fayrer minde,

Then to be butcher of an innocent childe.

John. Doth *Arthur* liue? O hast thee to the Peeres,

Throw this report on their incens'd rage,

And make them tame to their obedience.

Forgiue the Comment that my passion made

Vpon thy feature, for my rage was blinde,

And foule imaginarie eyes of blood

Prefented thee more hideous then thou art.

Oh, answer not; but to my Closet bring

The angry Lords, with all expedient hast,

I coniure thee but slowly: run more fast. *Exit.*

Scena Tertia.

Enter Arthur on the walls.

Ar. The Wall is high, and yet will I leape downe.

Good ground be pittifull, and hurt me not:

There's few or none do know me, if they did,

This Ship-boyes semblance hath disguis'd me quite,

I am afraide, and yet Ile venture it.

If I get downe, and do not breake my limbes,

Ile finde a thousand shifts to get away;

As good to dye, and go; as dye, and stay.

Oh me, my Vnckles spirit is in these stones,

Heauen take my soule, and England keep my bones. *Exit.*

Enter Pembroke, Salisbury, & Bigot.

Sal. Lords, I will meet him at S. Edmondsbury,

It is our safetie, and we must embrace

This gentle offer of the perillous time.

Pem. Who brought that Letter from the Cardinal?

Sal. The Count *Meloane*, a Noble Lord of France,

Whose priuate with me of the Dolphines loue,

Is much more generall, then these lines import.

Big. To morrow morning let vs meere him then.
Sal. Or rather then set forward, for 'twill be
Two long dayes journey (Lords) or ere we meete.

Enter Bastard.

Bast. Once more to day well met, distemper'd Lords,
The King by me requests your presence straight.

Sal. The king hath dispossest himselfe of vs,

We will not lyne his thin-bestaied cloake

With our pure Honors: nor attend the foote

That leaues the print of blood where ere it walkes.

Returne, and tell him so: we know the worst.

Bast. What ere you thinke, good words I thinke

were best.

Sal. Our greefes, and not our manners reason now.

Bast. But there is little reason in your greefe.

Therefore 'twere reason you had manners now.

Pem. Sir, sir, impatience hath his prinledge.

Bast. 'Tis true, to hurt his master, no mans else.

Sal. This is the prison: What is he lyes heere?

P. Oh death, made proud with pure & princely beuty,

The earth had nor a hole to hide this deece.

Sal. Marther, as hating what himselfe hath done,

Doth lay it open to vrge on repenge.

Big. Or when he doom'd this Beautie to a graue,

Found it too precious Princely, for a graue:

Sal. Sir *Richard*, what thinke you? you haue beheld,

Or haue you read, or heard, or could you thinke?

Or do you almost thinke, although you see,

That you do see? Could thought, without this obiect

Forme such another? This is the very top,

The height, the Crest: or Crest vnto the Crest

Of murders Armes: This is the bloodiest shame,

The wildest Savagery, the vildest stroke

That ever wall-ey'd wrath, or staring rage

Presented to the teares of soft remorse.

Pem. All murders past, do stand excus'd in this:

And this so sole, and so vnmatcheable,

Shall get a holinesse, a puritie,

To the yet vnbegotten sinne of times;

And proue a deadly blood-shed, but a iest,

Exampled by this heynous spectacle.

Bast. It is a damned, and a bloody worke,

The gracelesse action of a heauy hand,

If that it be the worke of any hand.

Sal. If that it be the worke of any hand?

We had a kinde of light, what would ensue:

It is the shamefull worke of *Huberts* hand,

The practice, and the purpose of the king:

From whose obedience I forbid my soule,

Kneeling before this roine of sweete life,

And breathing to his breathlesse Excellence

The Incense of a Vow, a holy Vow:

Neuer to taste the pleasures of the world,

Neuer to be infected with delight,

Nor conuersant with Ease, and Idleness,

Till I haue set a glory to this hand,

By giuing it the worship of Reuenge.

Pem. *Big.* Our soules religiously confirme thy words.

Enter Hubert.

Hub. Lords, I am hot with haste, in seeking you,

Arthur doth liue, the king hath sent for you.

Sal. Oh he is bold, and blusshes not at death.

Auant thou hatefull villain, get thee gone. (the Law?)

Hub. I am no villaine. *Sal.* Must I rob

Bast. Your sword is bright fir, put it vp againe.

Sal. Not till I sheath it in a murderers skin.

Hub. Stand

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your Worth, y

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Hub. Not f

My innocent lif

Sal. Thou a

Hub. Do no

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Pem. Cut hi

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Sal. Stand b

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Second a Villai

Hub. Lord

Big. Who k

Hub. 'Tis no

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My date of life

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Hub. Do bu

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I left him well

Bast. Go, b

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